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BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
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CATTLE FEEDING SITUATION - NOVEMBER 1, 1930.

The demand for stocker and feeder cattle during October improved considerably. This resulted in relatively large shipments from markets into the Corn Belt feeding states. At the same time prices tended to strengthen somewhat during the month while the usual trend of prices during October is downward.

The estimated shipments of stocker and feeder cattle into the 11 Corn Belt states in October, inspected through markets, were about 35,000 head or 6 per cent smaller than the heavy October shipments of 1929, but were as large or larger than any other October in the past five years and 5 per cent above the 5-year October average. The proportion of October shipments to the total for the four months July to October was the largest in 12 years. The total of these shipments for the four months July to October this ^{year} was about 11 per cent smaller than for these months in 1929 and smaller than for any other year since 1921 except in 1927 when the October shipments were very small.

Compared to last year the decrease in the shipments during the four months was mostly in the total to the states east of the Mississippi River. The total shipments to the states west of the river were only 5 per cent smaller, with a large increase into Nebraska and some increase into South Dakota and Minnesota, but with Iowa, Missouri and Kansas all having decreases.

As during the previous 3 months this year the shipments during October included an unusually large proportion of feeder calves and a small proportion of cows and heifers. Records from 4 leading stocker and feeder markets show that the proportion of calves in the October shipments this year was 21 per cent of the total compared to 14 per cent in October 1929 and 9 per cent in 1928 and 1927 and the actual number of calves was nearly 70 per cent larger than in 1929. The proportion of cows and heifers in October was 13 per cent this year, 16 per cent last year and 22 per cent in 1928. The proportion of steers weighing over 800 pounds was smaller in October this year than last, while the proportion under 800 pounds was about the same.

Information available as to feeding prospects in the western states for the coming winter indicate that there will be some decrease in cattle feeding in this area as a whole. Decreased feeding is probable in Colorado, due to a decrease in northern Colorado, with little change in the rest of the state. Decreases are also indicated in Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada and Washington, with some increase in California and not much change in Idaho.

The improved demand for and the increased shipments of stocker and feeder cattle in October were due to the declining prices of corn and other feed stuffs, to the somewhat improved prospects for corn production, to the relatively wide spread between feeder and fat cattle prices and the generally favorable weather through October. This demand will probably continue through November, especially if the weather during the month is favorable, as more than the usual proportion of corn stalkfields will be available for pasture early in the month due to the early completion of husking.

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